



Representative Lamar, Senator Cohen and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee.

My name is Jim Gildea, and I am the Chairman of the Connecticut Commuter Rail Council. I am offering written testimony IN OPPOSITION OF:

RAISED BILL NUMBER 1082

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REGARDING A REDUCTION IN BLOOD ALCOHOL LIMITS FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING AND BOATING, ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL, THE SHORE LINE EAST STUDY AND MOTOR VEHICLES IN LIVERY SERVICE.

We stand in opposition of **Raised Bill 1082** for 2 key reasons. After careful consideration, talking to other stakeholders, including both rail and transit advocates and riders, we've concluded that while creating a Public Transportation Council is an admirable goal that creates space for all public transportation users. The current bill proposal however does disservice to Connecticut's rail and bus customers.

Our transit riders simply deserve more representation and increased advocacy than this bill gives them. This proposal reduces the number of members that currently sit on the Connecticut Commuter Rail Council and then just simply has 2 members out of 13 dedicated to transit and bus advocacy. As rail advocates, our work is complete and full, and we can't imagine how 1 Council can successfully add the additional duties of transit riders and not take away from critical rail advocacy efforts. Transit riders deserve greater advocacy and a stronger voice. We have an opportunity to give our transit riders, a real voice and rolling out something that falls short of giving them all they deserve, is just a false start.

We also oppose this bill based upon the intentional striking out of the requirement that the Council may request and shall receive from any department, division, board, bureau, commission, agency, public authority of the state such assistance and data as it requests. This

was intentionally done so that Department of Transportation no longer needs to provide important data to an advocacy group that was created by our legislature with the intent of representing “boots on the ground” commuters.

We would add that none of our requests, which range from ridership metrics to crime statistics, to on time percentage via station, are anything other than thoughtful requests. There is simply no good reason why the Department of Transportation would not want to work with actual rail commuters to enhance the customer experience and it is unfortunate that attempting to silence the Council would be one of their first legislative priorities starting off a new term.

For those reasons stated above, the Connecticut Commuter Rail Council stands firmly in opposition of **Raised Bill 1082**.

Jim Gildea
Chairman, Connecticut Commuter Rail Council

A sampling of CT Commuter Rail Council Data Requests:

| Issue | Date | Notes | Status |
|---|-----------|---|---|
| On time percentage by major stations (New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, GCT) | 21-Apr-22 | CDOT and MNR indicated this could be provided | Followed back up with CDOT on 10/6/22 & 11/7/22 & 2/13/23 |
| Passenger volume by station | 21-Apr-22 | CDOT and MNR indicated this could be provided | Followed back up with CDOT on 10/6/22 & 11/7/22 & 2/13/23 |
| Major crimes metric per station (per MTA Monthly report) | 21-Apr-22 | CDOT and MNR indicated this could be provided | Followed back up with CDOT on 10/6/22 & 11/7/22 & 2/13/23 |
| Adding Hartford Line stations to the SLE trip planner tool | 15-May-22 | CDOT indicated they would look into this | Followed back up with CDOT on 9/21/22 |
| Can we have the numbers for each of the 3 express trains that are part of the super express | 17-Aug-22 | CTDOT has requested the ridership data | Followed back up with CDOT on 10/6/22 & 11/7/22 & 2/13/23 |
| Can we have the updated counts for the Waterbury Branch line with the additional trains | 17-Aug-22 | CTDOT has requested the ridership data | Followed back up with CDOT on 10/6/22 & 11/7/22 & 2/13/23 |
| Harlem-125th added back as a stop for the morning express trains out of Bpt | 17-Aug-22 | CTDOT has requested MNR add train back | Closed – MNR added the Harlem-125 th Street stop |
| Possibility of maximizing volume and adding in Stratford as a regular WBL stop | 17-Aug-22 | CTDOT has started discussing this with MNR | Followed back up with CDOT on 10/6/22 & 11/7/22 & 2/13/23 |
| Resumption of quiet car - CCRC request | 2-Sep-22 | Comm Giulietti indicated he would follow up with MNR | Followed back up with CDOT on 11/7/22. MNR indicated on 1/18/23, they would not be resuming at this time. |
| Return of SLE THRU Express service | 21-Sep-22 | CDOT indicated they needed to address voltage differentials between service providers | Remains an open issue. |
| State run stations open when metro-north running full service | 19-Oct-22 | CDOT indicated they would look into this | Remains an open issue. Stations closed on Presidents Day 23 |